

possible without the grace of God and the love and support of her late husband, their children, Rev. Dr. Johnny H. Flakes, III, Merle J. Flakes, and Sencira Flakes; along with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Proverbs 11:25 says, "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." "Mama Flakes", as she was affectionately known, gave her life to God and dedicated herself to the service of others. On a personal note, when I came to Columbus, Georgia in 1972, she nurtured me as if I were one of her children. And, for that, I will be forever grateful. Furthermore, during my two decades as a member of the congregation and choir at Fourth Street and throughout my career, she and her husband shared advice, counsel, and wisdom with me and were always supportive of my career in public service. I can say without reservation that she was one of the most passionate and warmhearted individuals I have ever met. I am proud to consider Mama Flakes and the Flakes family as part of my extended family.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 730,000 people of the Second Congressional District of Georgia, and people all across the nation, in paying tribute to Mrs. Robena Gaines Flakes, for her selfless service to youth, the Church, and to humankind. We extend our deepest condolences to her family, friends, and all who mourn her loss. We pray that we will all be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

ARVADA ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA) for receiving the 2021 Arvada Chamber of Commerce's Behind the Scenes Award.

The Chamber's Behind the Scenes Award is given to an organization or individual who is an unsung hero in our community and is truly focused on ensuring the Arvada community and businesses are thriving.

The Arvada Economic Development Association team has exhibited leadership and collaboration through their willingness to partner and support the Arvada Chamber of Commerce and the local businesses they serve. The staff and board members of AEDA offered their time and talent to ensure the appropriate resources were allocated throughout Arvada in order to have an optimal impact on the business community as a whole. Through this investment, they have supported the economic recovery of the local business community during the COVID-19 pandemic, critical shifts to the local workforce system, and helped advance business education programs. These are a few of the countless examples of how AEDA has shown their commitment to their partners, local businesses and our community all while continuing to make Arvada one of the best places to do business.

Congratulations to Arvada Economic Development Association for this honor, and I thank them for their contribution to our community.

RECOGNIZING SALIM BAMOUE,
BLACK HISTORY MONTH ESSAY
CONTEST WINNER

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the exemplary work of Salim Bamoue, an 8th grade student at Vernon Johns Middle School in Petersburg, Virginia, and the middle school winner of the Black History Month essay contest I hosted earlier this month. Mr. Bamoue wrote a powerful essay on the legacy of my former colleague John Lewis and why his lifelong work on voting rights is still important today. I am inspired by Mr. Bamoue's words, and I encourage young people across our country to reflect on what this month means to them.

Since its creation less than 50 years ago, Black History Month has been a time to honor and reflect upon the remarkable achievements of the African-American community. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Salim Bamoue's exceptional work in celebration of Black History Month.

VA04 HIGH SCHOOL BLACK HISTORY MONTH
ESSAY CONTEST

(By Salim Bamoue)

The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by human beings for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison people because they are different from others.—Martin Luther King Jr. Many people consider voting to be the most prominent voice us citizens have in office. While this is true, people of color do not have equal opportunity to voice their opinions. John Lewis fought for most of his life to preserve the voting rights of his African American brothers and sisters. John Lewis's impact on voting rights can not be taken away. He has influenced changes that have been made and changes to be made in American society for years to come. The struggle for voting rights has always been long and arduous, and John Lewis despite all the adversity, fought through it so that minorities in America had equal opportunity to vote in the United States of America.

John Lewis was born on February 21, 1940 in a heavily segregated Alabama. He was born into terrible circumstances as he would grow up to be a victim of prejudice. When Jim Crow laws were in full effect and white superiority was preached everywhere and blacks were brutally persecuted due to the forceful stereotypes and rhetoric spread by white supremacists. Most people of color were gaslighted into believing they were actually inferior to whites. This genuinely applied to most things a normal American citizen would do. Voting especially was a huge issue. The issue of voting disproportionately benefited whites in a way which might have seemed minute. John Lewis saw this and decided his activism to the issue of voting rights. One of John Lewis' most prominent and notable moments in his life was Bloody Sunday. On March 7th, 1965, John Lewis and other activists were brutally beaten for protesting their voting rights. Voting rights have always been complicated. This did not deter John Lewis though as he's been fighting for this up until his passing.

John Lewis' legacy is still integral in our fight for voting rights. A bill is being worked on in his name to secure the votes of African American citizens. While for the most part

the disparity between whites and blacks isn't as notable, we are still currently struggling to attain our voting rights in a way in which we feel secured and just as considered as our white counterparts. John Lewis has fought for many years to attain voting rights for his people, even becoming a U.S. Representative so that people may look up to him and strive for what he strived for. The future looks promising as this new bill that may be passed in his name may directly affect black voters in such a way that more and more black voters are accounted for.

Throughout history, people of color have notably been on the short end of the stick and we still struggle to attain even our voting rights. But late John Lewis has dedicated his life to the cost in order to give black people an equal voice as to who we should place in our offices. The current state of the bill working on to be passed in John Lewis's name doesn't look so good as it has failed the senate vote twice and is exempt from filibuster, but that doesn't mean we sit down and act as if we cannot find a compromise or some sort of way to finally secure our voting rights as we as black Americans should always strive to secure the rights given to us and the fruits of our liberty. So I call upon black Americans to keep on fighting the persecution even through the face of adversity. There is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

IN RECOGNITION OF RARE
DISEASE DAY

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Rare Disease Day and to recognize the extraordinary challenges faced by Americans with rare diseases.

A disease is considered rare when it affects fewer than 200,000 people in the United States. Rare diseases are far more common than they sound. Over 7,000 different rare diseases have been identified to date. Unfortunately, only 10 percent of rare diseases have FDA-approved treatments.

To combat rare disease, we must not only make significant investments in research and treatments but address the racial disparities that exist within the rare disease community. While 25 to 30 million Americans have a rare disease, there are significant racial differences and people of color are particularly vulnerable to some rare conditions like sickle cell disease. From diagnosis to treatment, people of color face significant barriers to care. For example, on average it takes a rare disease patient 6 years to achieve a correct diagnosis, but for patients of color it can take even longer. Additionally, despite making up more than 38 percent of the U.S. population, people of color comprise only 16 percent of research study participants. Underrepresentation in research studies leads to a lack of understanding of effective treatments.

Health equity should factor into every aspect of the rare disease landscape, from diagnosis to research and treatment. I commend the work of organizations such as the Rare Disease Diversity Coalition (RDDC), comprised of rare disease experts, health and diversity advocates, and industry leaders dedicated to accelerating and advancing health equity for rare disease patients of color. Last November, the